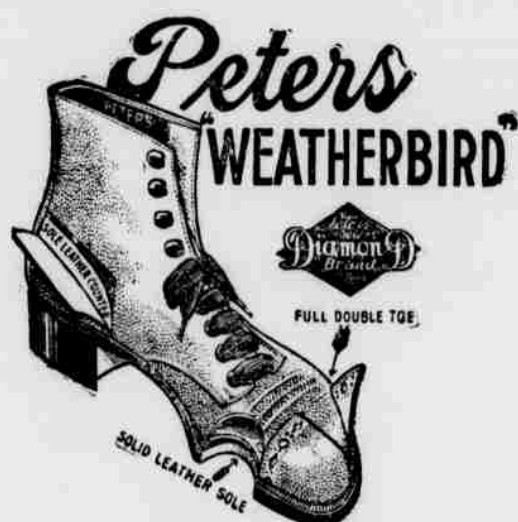


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THIS OFFICE

EDITORIAL SECTION

THE GAZETTE-TIMES

The Heppner Gazette, Established March, 30, 1883.
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OFFICIAL PAPER FOR MORROW COUNTY.

Thursday, October 5, 1916.

SHALL PRESIDENT WILSON BE CRITICISED?

(From the Portland Telegram.)

The most astounding obsession that has ever seized upon an intelligent body of people is, that it is little short of criminal to criticize any act of President Wilson. Instead of patriotism this is simply flunkeyism. There never was a man in the presidential chair who was not criticized and oftentimes with bitterness and malevolence. No man ever was more bitterly assailed than Washington and, as for Lincoln, he was a perfect target for abuse North and South.

We have had no sacred public characters in this country, at least until after they were dead, and even then they sometimes didn't stand much show when their friends go through reminiscences about them.

Sacredness attaches to no political character, not even President Wilson. Emerson said "Light is the best policeman." Without it, in a republic like ours we would soon be on the rocks. Nobody should be permitted to escape it. When that happens then goodbye to democratic institutions.

Place a president on a pedestal, pour the sacred oil on his head and say he and his acts are above and beyond criticism and our next step, when we get used to that species of idiocy, would be to place the supreme court in the same category. A little later governors and congressional representatives would be demanding and, by the same species of flunkeyism be able to exact, the same immunity and then the mayors would naturally want to climb into the same boat. What sort of government would we have then with our public servants transformed by our own acts into masters and autocrats? Anybody with half an eye may figure out for himself.

President Wilson and his acts are going to be vigorously criticised during the present campaign. If they were allowed to go by default we would simply be inviting an autocracy that would steal away our liberties. For the first two years of his administration President Wilson was practically immune from criticism. No man ever had a bigger or more sympathetic constituency. He was a sort of conscience-keeper for the nation. But, in the belief of many, he fell from his high estate when he adjusted everything to the measure of his political ambitions and began to play for a renomination. From that moment he lost his sense of proportion and sunk from the advocacy of political principles into an erratic advocate of acts of political expediency and opportunism.

Of course he will be criticised, measured, weighed and compared and the case fully presented will go to the great tribunal of the American people next November and whatever their verdict may be everybody will abide by it; but neither now nor later, will he or should he escape the full measure of criticism that may be his due.

OUR NATIONAL PARKS.

Through the courtesy of Congressman N. J. Sinnott of the Second Oregon District, we have received a beautiful portfolio of the National Parks of this country. The portfolio was issued after considerable work of assembling photographs and data, from the Department of the Interior.

There are 14 national parks in this country, in which are contained the natural scenic wonders of America. Many of the scenes found here are not surpassed in the old country and many loyal Americans pronounce home grandeur far more picturesque and beautiful than those of the Alps.

The laying off of public parks and the building of national highways is making that slogan "See America First" more popular with our own people each year. The rampage of war is destroying the historic points of interest in many parts of Europe. This will give added impetus to the slogan. The National Parks system works out for the benefit of tourists and all those who have a love for the beauty of nature.

The portfolio contains detailed information pertaining to all our national parks and excellent maps show the easiest routes by which they may be reached.

CAN YOU CONCEIVE OF SUCH A SITUATION.

The so-called "Land and Loan Measure" (Single tax) on the November ballot provides for loaning \$1500 without interest for 5 years to anyone who with his family has failed to accumu-

late property to a total value of \$2,250. Its hard to imagine a more absurd proposition. Every pauper in the U. S. would come to Oregon.

A sane man cannot conceive of such a condition. A man and his family who have failed to accumulate a home are unfortunate. Would it help them, however to loan them \$1500. Nothing is easier to get rid of than cash and the next thing the borrower would know, his money would be gone and he would be worse in the hole than ever.

A man who has failed to accumulate a home would stand small chance of paying back \$1500.

Why not change the law and simply give the propertyless person \$1500 outright. There would be as much sense to it.

The proposed Land and Loan Law penalizes thrift and puts a premium upon thriftlessness and extravagance at taxpayers' expense.

From an industrial standpoint it would kill the state, as industry could not assume such a burden and survive.

GOVERNED BY FORTY-NINE COMMISSIONS.

(From the Fresno Herald.)

The people of the United States are on the brink of suffering from their own laws, and from their own failure to investigate the management of railroads from the point of view of what is best for the railroads, what is best for railroad employees and what is best for the people.

We have in this country some 49 commissions—one to every state—which are picking at the railroads first in one state and then in another until the railroads do not know what to do. Government by commission is only satisfactory when there is one centralized commission, with centralized interests, and which rules for all the railroads in all parts of the country.

It is obviously ridiculous, for instance, to have one state demand such a rate for interstate commerce and for another adjoining state to demand a different rate, either higher or lower. This situation merely means that the railroads are operating under different conditions in every state.

The railroads are left in an even worse condition than ever, for now they are not only subject to control by 49 commissions, but by Congress as well.

How do they know what to expect? How can they plan for the future? They have no security that some state will not take a fall out of them next.

In this period of readjustment there are just two courses open for the proper management: one is government ownership; the other is one federal commission having full power over the roads.

It is impossible that the railroads favor government ownership, but they would undoubtedly receive with open arms the dictates of one commission.

ON THE QUESTION OF AN AMERICAN'S NEUTRALITY.

Can an American who sincerely believes in the principles of his own government be neutral in sentiment about the outcome of the European war? In 1776, when we were fighting against the exactions of an autocratic king, the men of liberal mind in France and even in England sympathized with the struggle. During the civil war, also, the federal agents were able to win the sympathy of liberal England although our blockade vitally damaged the prosperity of the liberal cotton manufacturing counties. French liberal thought also favored the north because it fought for liberty, although that was not the technical cause of the war. Now the liberal governments of Europe are all on one side of a great struggle and fight for democracy and liberty. They fight not so much because the technical cause of the beginning of the war had to do with the liberty of a small nation as because, if they are defeated, liberalism will have received a serious setback. The German-American is faced with a clash between the principles of his country and the blood of his ancestors. It was the same choice that faced the men who fought in our revolution and the men who fought in the German revolution of 1848. Because the men of 1776 chose to take hold of liberty even in the face of fighting their own kin, we now have a nation; and many of our citizens of German descent are here because their fathers had the courage to make the same decision.—World's Work.

FOOLING THE PEOPLE.

The simple and unadorned fact is that the really valuable agricultural land in the Oregon & California grant was sold off long ago. The railroad did not want to retain anything but the timber. The so-called agricultural land that still remains is either worthless in character or is so completely isolated that making a living on it would be impossible. The grant lands are valuable principally for their timber, and land with 300,000 feet of timber to the forty cannot be taken up. It is not right to lead the people to believe that happy homes are waiting for them in the O. & C. grant and then cruelly disappoint them.—Eugene Register.

HURRY UP AND REGISTER.

Mr. Citizen do you wish to vote in the November election? If you do you had better take advantage of the two remaining days and register. If you were registered for the primary election last May it is not necessary that you register again, unless you have changed your party affiliations or have moved out of one precinct into another. Register now and you will be saved this trouble for all time to come. Registration books will close on the 7th of October, just one month before election.

Freak laws in Oregon have about seen their day, we hope. It is gratifying to note the general sentiment among the taxpayers regarding initiative bills that would put laws on the statute books hampering industry and holding the old state up to ridicule before the entire nation. A better law would be one which would prevent every Tom, Dick and Harry from trying to put through some pet hobby at every election.

"Nobody for Hughes but the people."